

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

Applicants note, with appreciation, the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18.

By this Amendment, Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 7. Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 11. Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form and to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 15 (with minor modification not affecting allowability). Claims 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, and 17 have been canceled accordingly. Claims 1-6 have also been canceled, to reduce the issues, and Claims 19-23 have been added. As a result of the foregoing actions, all having been taken without prejudice or disclaimer, Claims 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 18-23 are pending further consideration.

Independent Claims 8, 12, and 16, and their respective dependents, are believed to be allowable in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Independent Claim 19 has been added to provide more comprehensive protection for certain aspects of Applicants' invention. Note that Claim 19 recites, inter alia, an

elastic member that is brought into contact with an abutment portion of the housing to absorb an impact at the end of the reciprocal movement, and having a portion which is disposed between an inner periphery of the metal member and an outer periphery of the moving shaft, and which abuts the outer periphery of the shaft along the entire axial length of the inner periphery of the metal member. See, e.g., the arrangement of the elastic member in Figs. 9 and 11. It is apparent that the applied references neither disclose nor suggest such an arrangement. Claim 19 is therefore believed also to be allowable.

Claims 20-21 depend from independent Claim 19 and should be allowed at least for the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 19.

In view of the amendments presented herein, it is respectfully urged that the outstanding rejections be withdrawn and that this application now be passed to issue.

Applicants also request that in the Notice of Allowability the Examiner confirm receipt and consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 5, 2006.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 (XA-10199) any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper

and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been separately requested, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By: /Mitchell W. Shapiro/  
Mitchell W. Shapiro  
Reg. No. 31,568

Miles & Stockbridge, P.C.  
1751 Pinnacle Drive  
Suite 500  
McLean, Virginia 22102-3833  
(703) 903-9000

Michael A. Minter  
Reg. No. 58,797

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